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ABSTRACT

"Options in Education" is a radio news program which focuses on issues and developments in education. This transcript contains discussions of volunteer parent tutors in a junior high school, the feminization of the teaching profession, the test score controversy, busing as an issue in the political primaries, and busing and the role of the social scientist. Participants in the program include John Merrow and Wendy Blair, moderators; parents, students, and faculty of Eisenhower Junior High School in Laurel, Maryland; reporters Kathy Lewis and David Ensor; Maxine Seller; Gail Kelley; Marshall Smith, of the National Institute of Education; Pat Caddell; Ben Wattenberg; Mark Shields; James M. Coleman; and Kenneth B. Clark. (JM)

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INSTITUTE FOR EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP
THE GEORGE WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY

TRANSCRIPT FOR PROGRAM SCHEDULED FOR BROADCAST

THE WEEK OF MARCH 8, 1976

National Public Radio

Options in Education

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CS 203 016

OPTIONS IN EDUCATION is an electronic weekly magazine devoted to coverage of news, features, policy & people in the field of education. The program is available for broadcast to the 181 member stations of National Public Radio.

Executive Producer is John Merrow, Producer is Midge Hart, Co-Host is Wendy Blair, Reporter is David Ensor.

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(Music)

BLAIR: I'm Wendy Blair with NPR's OPTIONS IN EDUCATION.

(Music)

OPTIONS IN EDUCATION is a news magazine about all the issues and developments in education -- from the ABC's of primary education to the alphabet soup of government programs. If you've ever been to school, we have something that will interest you.

On this edition of OPTIONS IN EDUCATION --

Hindsight:

"The tidy-upper - she tidies up the messy immigrant families. That's a major kind of thing. Woman is the housekeeper of society."

Insight:

"When he comes home from school, I understand in a way that I never did before what he has had to deal with all day long."

Foresight:

"Is government getting bigger?"

"Government is getting too big, yes ma'am."

And, finally, John Merrow has a special report on a controversy among researchers over busing and white flight.

"Now, under the column where it says, 'Look for', I want you to look for the . . ."

MERROW: Our first story tells what happened in a junior high school in Laurel, Maryland when parents decided to change some things they didn't like. Wendy Blair reports.

"And I'm going to flash this on the screen at very high speeds. So, make sure that you make your eyes do the work."

PARENT: So, we called on our friends first, and asked our friends to call on their friends, and that's how we now number 100 people.

BLAIR: Eisenhower Junior High School was plagued by problems common to many schools today -- slack discipline, racial tension and a lack of money for special programs. What separates Eisenhower Junior High School from other schools is that parents of students joined the principal and faculty to make things happen.

Parents became counselors, hall monitors and tutors in reading and math. Jan Dalton and Dianne Colwell are two parents who helped mold a group of concerned individuals into an effective force for change. Jan Dalton:

DALTON: We had Blacks and whites confronting each other. We had so called rumbles in the school. We had a great deal of intimidation, extortion. We couldn't see where anything was being done about it.

BLAIR: How did you mobilize yourselves without antagonizing?

DALTON: In the beginning there was antagonism, and they were defensive in the beginning. We had - Dianne and I - had to prove that we were here in support of the faculty, and not against them.

COLWELL: We seem to be three factions, who were not communicating with each other -- the students, the teachers and the parents. And the parents were not well aware of what was going on here. The teachers were disturbed, and the community was not getting any feedback. There were meetings being held in homes throughout the different communities. And I said, "Well, that's no good. Complaining to each other isn't going to change anything. If you're unhappy, get in there and find out what's going to happen. And you go to the people who are complaining and you twist their arm a little bit, and you say, 'You wanna know what's happening? Come to the school.'"

And the first year was rough. It was very difficult, but you get maybe five, and they go home and they tell their neighbors and their friends, "Hey, it's great. It's fun working with the kids. I've learned so much about my own child by working with other students. I can see where their attitudes are coming from." And this kind of spreads. You start with five, and each of those five talk to another five, and it just gets like a snowball effect.

BLAIR: Once inside the school, parents didn't like all that they saw, but they found it hard to identify problems they could help solve. A committee looked into disciplinary problems and discovered that trouble begins when students are bored or uninvolved in their schoolwork. More digging led to one of the reasons why.

PARENT: We were shocked to find out how many children were poor readers, and really there are some non-readers in the junior high school. We felt that not much could be done unless there could be a program that would teach them how to read.

We were finding that there were so many children needing help that were far below grade level, and we felt that, as volunteers, we could work with one or two, maybe three at a time, but that then left so many who didn't have any help. So, we decided that we would seek some means of helping more children at a time. And through meetings and meetings and meetings - and it goes on and on and on - with the Reading Specialist for this area, and with teachers in the school, and with parents, we said, "Something has got to be done for these children. What can we do?" And, of course, the same old thing: The Budget. "There's no money for this. There's no money for that." And we said, "But we have the volunteers. We need some means of reaching more children." And it didn't look like we were going to get it because of budget problems, and we just pushed and pushed and pushed. But in a very positive manner.

BLAIR: Now, when you say, "Push", what sorts of things constituted the "pushing"?

PARENT: Like making a telephone call to the same person every single day and saying, "We need help. What are you going to do for us?" And I would call, and I would say, "We're concerned and we want to help. Give us some means to help." Then, I recall Jan or one of the other volunteers and I would get together and discuss who I talked to, and what I said. And, then, they in turn would make the same phone call and say the same thing day in and day out. And they finally said, "Get these people off our backs, will yah? Do something."

BLAIR: Transferring concern into action required the cooperation of the faculty and school administration. Eisenhower School principal, Harry Rose, provided that vital link.

ROSE: I think the need at Eisenhower is the same need that there would be in any junior high school where there's always a need for more hands. Teachers cannot leave a regular class and devote a great deal of individual attention to individual youngsters.

BLAIR: Would you say that the students who are being helped by the volunteers are primarily academic problems? Or are they discipline problems, or students with trouble at home, or emotional problems?

ROSE: It's hard to say which comes first: The chicken or the egg. Whenever you have a youngster with emotional problems, that gets in the way of his learning. And whenever you have a youngster with learning problems - such as difficulty with reading on grade-level, or a youngster who's in a math class who doesn't understand the concepts being presented - he's likely to feel upset and concerned about that. And some students -- the more upset they get, the less they think.

BLAIR: Well, how does this volunteer program try to minister to that kind of mixed problem?

ROSE: What happens is that if you have a youngster who is working on a one-to-one basis, then he doesn't have to perform for his "peer group". And there's much less anxiety for him or her. And so, an individual adult - whether it's a teacher or a parent-volunteer - can give the individual youngster a lot of reassurance without his peer group observing.

BLAIR: With the help of the school principal, parents convinced the county to appropriate $8500 to set up a special reading lab. However, no budget existed for the kind of individual attention students needed to make that lab work effectively. So, along with one full-time reading specialist, parent volunteers went to work in the lab. Before they pitched in, the lab could handle about ten students a day. Now, they're handling up to 60. But getting the equipment for the lab, and getting the volunteers to tutor, is just part of the solution. Winning over reluctant students is also a difficult hurdle, as Jan Dalton discovered.

DALTON: In one particular case, one child that I worked with was very hostile through September, October, November & December. He would talk in the filthiest language that he could. He did absolutely everything he could to shock me, and to stop me from coming in. He thought that if he could be nasty enough, dirty enough, that I would not come back. This lasted until about December, and I couldn't see where I'd made much progress with him until one day I was pulling away from the supermarket. I had been ill for two weeks, and I was pulling away from the supermarket, and I heard a young boy yelling my name. And I stopped my car, and he had chased me half a block, I suppose, and asked why I hadn't been there for two weeks. I said, "Well, I've been ill." And he said, "Oh, I thought maybe someone had done something to you." And from then on, every Friday I didn't show up he wanted to know why. And every Friday he'd look for me. And we were friends after that.

He asked me one day, "Who pays you?" And I told him no one pays me, and I'd really rather be out having lunch with friends or playing bridge, but I was very concerned about the fact that he didn't read on a seventh grade level, and I knew I could help him. So, that's why I came -- to help him learn how to read. He was very impressed by

the fact that no one paid me, and I think that might have been a turning point.

BLAIR: Dianne Colwell worked for over a year with a student named Gary. She believes that discipline problems come from kids who, for one reason or another, don't feel good about themselves.

COLWELL: I first started working with Gary without really too much information about what his problems were. Someone had said he had difficulty in reading. So, we started out by having him read with me or to me, and I found out that he really didn't read that badly. And, as we progressed, we found out that Gary had a lot of good thoughts. His mind worked well. But that his problems seemed to be getting the thoughts down on paper. I found out that Gary liked cars, and, from my own experience, that you read more and are more interested in something that you care about, and something that means something to you - and since Gary liked cars, and so did I - so we had a good common ground to start with. And my husband had been in drag-racing, and Gary liked drag-racing. So, we got some information about drag-racing, and we practiced by using the words that he was familiar with to transfer his good thoughts and vocabulary, the spoken vocabulary, into written sentences.

I really don't feel that I helped him that much academically. If I'm going to be honest about it, I don't think I did. But the fact that he feels more confidence in himself is the break-through. And this is what we really are striving for with the volunteer work. The fact that he was willing and volunteered to come and talk to you is an indication of his confidence in himself, and his ability to cope better with interactions between people.

BLAIR: You mean that there was a time when he wouldn't have done that? He wouldn't have come and spoken to me?

COLWELL: Oh, yeah. I'm sure that he wouldn't have last year. But I was quite amazed when I asked him if he would, and he said, "Sure." Without any hesitation. And that, in itself, is our rewards as volunteers; to see the change in the personalities of these kids.

BLAIR: It's obvious that the tutors begin to feel good about their students, but how do the students feel about having parents in the school? I talked with Dianne Colwell's student, Gary, and other students involved in the tutoring program.

GARY: Well, I'm doing better this year because I had help last year, and a lot more kids need help, and they can get it there. It was really easy. It was fun. Before that, I wasn't interested in work. I didn't pay attention in class, and I probably disturbed the class a lot more than anybody else.

BLAIR: Do you like school or not?

GARY: It's all right.

BLAIR: You won't commit yourself further than that?

GARY: No.

BLAIR: Tell me about your experience, or your opinion, about the parent volunteer program.

STUDENT: Before I wasn't doing my homework. I was always getting in lots of trouble in the class. They used to tell me to sit down,

and I'd just say, "No." I was trying to get out of that homework bit. Usually I had a hard time just sitting there and listening. It goes in one ear and goes out the other one.

BLAIR: What did you do that helped?

STUDENT: I just paid attention and I'd try my best.

BLAIR: Are you enjoying school more now?

STUDENT: I learn more now than what I used to learn. Because I didn't know how to do some of the work.

BLAIR: When you're working in a very small group, just two people, and a volunteer, is it different?

STUDENT: I get more help that way. I get a better understanding. I can understand what she say. She spends more time explaining, showing me how to do it, and giving me examples of how you do it. I learned to concentrate on what you're doing and think about what you're doing.

BLAIR: I understand that things are changing for you. Your last two grading periods have really brought some good things. Will you tell me about that?

STUDENT: In my English class, I got A. And in my Math class, I got an A, and my Social Study class, I got A. In my Science class, I got A, and my Guitar class, I got a B. And in my Shop class, I got C.

BLAIR: Besides counseling and tutoring, parents run many extra-curricular activities, and they monitor the halls and the bathrooms. Now, junior high is a time when children seek to assert their independence from Mom and Dad, so I asked children how they felt when their parents started coming to school along with them.

STUDENT: Well, at first, a lot of kids used to say, "I saw your Mom the other day, and when she sees me, she doesn't run up to me in the hall and make a big deal about it, and yelling for me or anything." But, you know, it doesn't bother me.

STUDENT: I guess it's a good idea. Well, at first I thought maybe the kids would start calling me names or something like that. But, really, it's all right.

BLAIR: Did they call you names at first?

STUDENT: No, they just kid around with me usually.

BLAIR: How do you feel about the program itself? Its value?

STUDENT: It keeps a lot of kids from smoking in the school, and it keeps them out of trouble.

BLAIR: How does it keep them from smoking?

STUDENT: Well, they won't smoke in front of an adult. So, I guess they're usually scared anyway.

BLAIR: Where would kids smoke?

STUDENT: In the bathrooms. And my mom watches bathrooms.

BLAIR: The parents at Eisenhower aren't paid for their efforts, but it's plain to see that they're benefiting from the experience. Here's an example of the feelings of some parent-volunteers.

PARENT: Some of them like for you to give them a little hug or a pat on the head. And they still like that - even at a junior high age. Some of them do. Part of the reason I'm helping is that it meets my needs also. I want to be needed, too.

PARENT: The most important thing is their self image. And who cares about them. Who cares if I learn this? What difference does it make if I can read or write? And a parent-volunteer, by working with the student, and coming in and saying, "I'm here. I care about you. I care about what happens to you. You need to learn, but more importantly, you need to know someone cares about you." Just by the volunteer's presence, the students know the world does care; there are caring people in this world. It takes a lot of chips off the shoulders.

PARENT: One of the benefits that I have obtained by being a volunteer in the schools is learning about my own son, and understanding his problems and understanding peer group pressure, and seeing what he has to face all day long. When he comes home from school, I understand in a way that I never did before what he has had to deal with all day long - as far as the way the other kids dress, why he wants to dress the way he does, the way they talk (the slang and the bad grammar) -- this has no reflection on the home. Before I got involved, I felt that I was a terrible mother, and that I was doing something terribly wrong because my son spoke this way or he dressed this way. And when you get involved in the schools, you realize that this is the age. It's the peer group pressure. And this, too, shall pass.

We can change things. We can make it better if we just learn to give and keep trying.

("Gonna Build Me A Mountain")

BLAIR: John, when you hear the word "schoolteacher", do you think of a man or a woman?

MERROW: A woman, I guess.

BLAIR: Yeah, women do dominate the teaching field - especially in elementary school. When you hear the word "professor", you'd probably think of a man and men do dominate higher education, but these patterns weren't always exactly as they are today. They were worse.

MERROW: In honor of International Women's Day, March 8th, we're taking a historical look at women in the teaching profession.

> "The tidy-upper. She tidies up the messy immigrant families. That's a major kind of thing - the woman as housekeeper of society."

BLAIR: Maxine Seller and Gail Kelley are assistant professors at the State University of New York in Buffalo. They're researching the feminization of the teaching profession in the 19th century. First, Professor Seller talks with Kathy Lewis of member station WBFO in Buffalo.

SELLER: According to statistics, in 1840, for example, 61% of public school teachers were male, and by 1865, only 14% were men. And then, by 1905, only 2% were men.

KELLEY: I think this has to be linked with the huge expansion of the number of children in school. This is a period in which compulsory education laws got passed, and suddenly many, many children were going to be in school for many, many years. It would cost too much to have men teaching all these children. Women could be paid about half the salary of men, and they were.

I think, secondly, this idea that she is a natural teacher because her role is to nurture and take care of children. So, this was considered okay for a woman to do. It was non-threatening to anybody else in the society. It kept the role going.

LEWIS: Was the feminization of the teaching force more than just desirable, but also a necessity in that men were leaving the profession for more lucrative opportunities?

SELLER: At least, the big American myth, if not the reality in these days, was: If you worked hard, and I guess if you were male, you could be a millionaire, and people knew that teaching, traditionally, was a poorly paid job. Think of those teachers of literature - the teachers of, say, an Ichabod Crane kind of story - even a male teacher was a male who couldn't do much else very well. He was a ne'er do well, he was a man whose farm had failed, or failed as a shopkeeper, and this was a last ditch kind of stand for him.

KELLEY: Yeah, but I think also probably the number of men teaching didn't go down absolutely. The percentage did. America was going through an enormous school expansion, and where men in the teaching force were changed - from the primary school into the secondary school, and from the secondary school into the higher education It's a different bag. I don't think the absolute numbers went down.

SELLER: I think there's another aspect to the feminization. Schooling in the old days was a way of teaching you a few basic skills - perhaps just read the Bible and save your soul. By the 19th century, school was considered a substitute for family, and the socialization role -- the idea that school as teaching proper morals and proper behavior. School as a substitute for parents who were not doing what they were supposed to be doing. These ideas became very important, and in this sense, the woman in the school was the substitute for the mother at home, who perhaps was not at home, or at least in the eyes of the school authorities was not doing what she was supposed to be doing.

KELLEY: A substitute for the immigrant mother and the immigrant working class mother.

SELLER: And these were the new populations. To a large extent, public schools were set up to serve these groups. I think less is talked about in terms of education than of morals, and women were supposed to have a monopoly on morality in the 19th century, and men went out into this hard, cut-throat world, and women were the keepers of the moral fire; keeping the fire of morality going. So, if you're going to tell children nice things about being good, perhaps a woman is the one to tell them these things rather than a man. And a lot of this is role modeling - not that she'll make them into great intellects. You don't want them to be too intellectual just to go into the factories, but she's supposed to teach them how

to keep their faces and hands clean, and wear clean clothes and be polite, and obedient and docile, and she is a perfect role model for this because, after all, it's expected of a teacher. (She should be neat and clean and docile.) And she really is a living example of what these children were supposed to be.

KELLEY: I also think the economic thing is very, very critical. Because when the decision was made to expand schooling and to, essentially, Americanize immigrant kids and to keep the working class from breaking windows - which I think is a quote from Horace Mann - that one of the things that happened was: "It's got to be cheap." No one really cared that much about what happened to people who attended public schools. And the cheaper the better. And the issue was: Who could you get cheapest that would still perform that function? And that's where women came in.

SELLER: The fact that she was a model - and, like, interchangeable parts - if all the kids are the same age, doing the same things at the same level at the same time, it's more efficient. Just like making parts for a machine. It would be more efficient if it were done this way.

KELLEY: And here's another crucial thing. Teacher Training was then called "Normal School". What you did was to normalize behavior on the part of the teacher, and those that were all set up were essentially teaching the pedagogy of training teachers, which was how to obey the rules of the school system. They also taught how to manage the school system, how to keep the registers, what records you need to keep, these are the textbooks that are available and which the State approves, these are the ones of which the state does not approve, and that, women were subjected to this more because women happened to go into teaching because it was the only white-collar profession available for women. That's not to say that men who went into "Normal Training" didn't go through the same thing.

If you look into colonial school systems, you'll find the same thing going on. The colonialists, as well, were told that the most important thing was the development of moral character. We want you to impart education without too much emphasis on intellect. And this was very, very clearly said. And the other thing was: Follow the rules, and if you don't, these are the penalties. The school board will fire you. You will be left without a job, and, God forbid, have to go into a factory.

But I think if you look at teacher training that way, it would be hard to say if it was immediately done for women. It was done for teachers on the part of a state which is creating a public school system to maintain social order.

SELLER: I think it's left a very undesirable stereotype. In my college days, we always felt that the women going into teacher training courses were really the worst students. It's an unfortunate kind of stereotype, but I'm sure it still hangs around.

KELLEY: And another thing it does is to keep teachers' salaries low. If they're dumber, why should they be paid more?

SELLER: And there's still the cliche that if you can't do anything else, you can always go into teaching.

KELLEY: Right. My mother always told me: "Get a teaching certificate." It's a woman's life insurance policy.

SELLER: Right. But it was also said to immigrant males. "If you want to make it in American society, you should first go into teaching, and it will be a secure profession which will buy you your way into the American middle classes."

One of the things we're witnessing now in the American economy's demise - or whatever you want to call it at this stage - is an increasing pressure and changes in the teaching profession. You can see the pressures to go back; that is, as other white collar jobs are not available to men, they pressure into the teaching profession, squeezing out women as fast as they can, trying to get higher wages, which you can do if you masculinize a profession -- like they're doing with nursing. It's the same thing. And, also, that other disciplines walk into the Teacher Training Act to upgrade it. And that means getting rid of the women training teachers.

KELLEY: And there are certain psychological things thrown in. Now, they will say that too many female teachers are injuring these little boys - especially in the schools.

SELLER: Yeah, they're masculinizing them.

KELLEY: That rather than helping a little boy by providing a mother-image, these women in the schools are injuring the little boys by smothering them with too much feminization.

BLAIR: Maxine Seller and Gail Kelley talking with Kathy Lewis of member station WBFO in Buffalo.

(Music)

MERROW: While we're on the subject of women, several months ago we reported on a continuing decline in test scores of college-bound students. Experts couldn't explain it then, and now experts don't agree on two possible explanations. I spoke with Dr. Marshall Smith of the National Institute of Education. I asked him, "Is it a case of cherchez-la-femme?"

SMITH: Well, I gather you're referring to the recent report from the ACT, the American College for Testing. They suggested that one reason was that there are more women now taking the test than had in the past. I did mention to a staff member of mine that you're going to ask some questions about the ACT and the possibility that women were the cause of the decline. And her answer was, "Ballderdash!"

MERROW: Why would more women mean lower scores?

SMITH: The reason is that in the past only the best qualified women were given the opportunity to go to college, and now many more women are given the opportunity who may not score as highly on the tests, and, thus, the overall score for women may go down.

MERROW: Roughly ten years ago . . . .

SMITH: About 45% of the total of people taking the ACT's were women, and now it's something like 55%. Well, that just by and of itself is one possible explanation. There are some other explanations. David Wiley and Dr. Harnischfeger did a careful analysis for the Ford Foundation as to some of the possible causes of the test score decline. And they pointed out pretty clearly that test score decline cannot only be attributed to either the declining aptitude of women - which

no one is really suggesting - or even to the fact that more women are taking the tests.

MERROW: What is the problem then?

SMITH: Well, in fact, if you look at the test scores - not only the ACT's, but on the ETS's, the College Board tests - you find that both men and women are declining. So, it's an across the board affair for the college-bound students. But that points out fairly clearly that the types of courses that students have taken over the past five or six years, in particular, have changed. In high schools there has been a substantial decline in the number of students taking college-bound courses in English, Literature, Mathematics and Science. The kinds of courses that were traditionally required for people going to college - and now perhaps they're not so required. College courses do traditionally teach the kinds of things picked up by the tests, and I think we've got a nice example of the effectiveness of schools here.

Just to turn the coin to the other side -- In the past we had more people taking these courses. We had higher test scores. Now, we have fewer people taking the courses, and we have lower test scores. That indicates to me some substantial effect of schools.

MERROW: That's an interesting way to interpret it. Why is it happening that students in high school are not having to take more of the traditional math courses, the traditional English courses, the traditional history courses?

SMITH: I think there are a variety of reasons. Drs. Wiley and Harnischfeger point out that these courses are not being replaced by vocational courses or homemaking courses or whatever. And they indicate that the replacement may be in areas where the students are getting out into the community, are exploring the ways the community could interact with the school . . . .

MERROW: Work/Study programs.

SMITH: Work/Study of a sort, that's right. They may not be paid for the work - and they probably aren't - but they are more practical experience courses. That's right.

MERROW: That would suggest anyway that it would be much better for those young people to be in school, reading books - instead of working for free somewhere out in the community. Is that the way you read it?

SMITH: Well, I think that depends on how well the students do in college. And the bottom line on all of this is whether or not the students will be less effective mathematicians, less effective scientists in the future, whether or not we'll run into a dearth of people who are qualified to become engineers. And there doesn't seem to be any evidence over the past ten years that we're entering into periods where people cannot either understand the college courses in these areas or go on to be effective professionals in later life.

MERROW: Maybe then the decline in test scores doesn't mean very much.

SMITH: They don't mean very much. That's right. In fact, the position now of the College Boards Entrance Examination Service, which puts out the College Boards is that the tests - even though there has

been a decline - the tests are still maintaining a central purpose, which is to predict actual college grades. And the prediction has not gone down. That is, a person who scores low on the college boards now will still not do so well in college. A person who scores high - even though it's not as high as the high was before - will do considerably better than the person who scored low. I didn't want to give the impression that I'm not worried about it. I am. There are plans underway at the National Institute of Education, and in some other places, to really get at the effects of the decline to determine whether or not we are losing some national resource as the scores go down.

MERROW: What about the movement away from traditional courses in high school? Does that bother you?

SMITH: I think it's more flexible. I think in many cases it's more fun. I think one of the side statistics that Wiley & Harnischfeger point out is that the drop-out rate has gone down over the last ten years or so. Now, that suggests that more kids are graduating from high school. Perhaps it suggests they enjoy the high schools more. We don't have evidence on the latter point. We've, however, got the suggestion there.

It's not clear at all to me that we're giving up a great deal by losing the traditional courses and replacing them with this wider, more experiential kind of high school treatment.

MERROW: So, we shouldn't run off and condemn the high schools or get terribly upset about the whole thing.

SMITH: I think we should be upset to a significant degree. I think we should explore this in as great detail as quickly as possible. But I don't think we should effect policy right now which would force students back into the same molds that they were ten, fifteen years ago.

MERROW: Just in order to get the scores back to where they were?

SMITH: That's right.

MERROW: Thanks very much. Mike Smith of the National Institute of Education.

("Man On The Street" Segment)

MERROW: We're in the thick of the presidential primaries and the one education-related issue that seems to be playing a significant role is busing.

BLAIR: Our next two reports concern aspects of court-ordered school desegregation. First, Reporter David Ensor talked to pollsters and political pundits recently, and he asked them how much difference the apparently widespread opposition to busing will make with the voters. Here is his report.

ENSOR: The first few presidential primaries are behind us, and candidates who, in one way or another, oppose the use of busing to desegregate schools appear to be doing pretty well. But how much of it is the busing issue that's getting them votes? Will a stand taken against busing, in the long haul, get a lot of votes for anybody? Absolutely not, say most pollsters. Absolutely, say many seasoned political observers - particularly if they're conservatives.

Pat Caddell heads Cambridge Survey Research, a firm used by many Democrats to take the temperature of the nation. Caddell finds a deep-seated cynicism among voters this time around, and he says that candidate charisma, and positions taken on inflation and jobs are how the voters will choose a president -- not social issues like busing or abortion.

CADDELL: We find that in terms of -- even though most people in the country are against busing -- the only place it ever shows up as a voting issue are places where people have to vote on it on the basis of where it's going on. I mean, only where people are directly affected will they become voting issues. And I think that's the answer this year.

ENSOR: So, you don't think that any candidates can be able to translate the concern into vote-gaining.

CADDELL: Well, I think the only one who does to any real extent is probably George Wallace.

ENSOR: Pollster Pat Caddell, whose view is that busing is Wallace's issue, gets backing from another source. Mark Shields was with Bobby Kennedy's campaign in '68, and he ran Edmund Muskie's campaign for president in '72. Since then, he's run campaigns for both winning and losing liberal Democrats at all levels.

SHIELDS: He who controls the dialogue in the campaign controls the campaign. There's just no question about it. I think the most precise example I can recall is 1972 in Florida when Senator Jackson spent a good part of his time, energy and effort expressing his own opposition to busing. And he raised that as an issue in the voters' minds. But the voters are intelligent and a surprisingly sophisticated group of people. To agree that busing was an important issue, they knew who had been against it longest, strongest, hardest and most unequivocably. And that, in their judgment, was Governor Wallace.

ENSOR: Political analyst Mark Shields. Shields runs into some strong dissent from Ben Wattenberg, co-author of "The Real Majority" and a long-time champion of Senator Henry Jackson.

WATTENBERG: You see, that's the strange view that says - Wallace and Nixon made the busing issue. Wallace and Nixon didn't. You know, it would be nice to attribute bad things to our enemies, but Wallace and Nixon didn't make the busing issue. The courts made the busing issues, and the parents made the busing issues. And to say that if Jackson hadn't taken a stand on the busing issue, then fewer people would be concerned about the busing issue, go up to Boston! They don't care about Jackson, Wallace and Nixon. They care about their kids being bused. And I find it so amusing that liberals, particularly, who have just spent eight years in the streets attempting to make a case about a political issue, the War, and say, "By God, we're going to make this an issue because we care passionately about it" -- to say to candidates coming into Massachusetts, "Oh, you shouldn't make busing an issue. That's irresponsible to suggest to people that you can remedy this - when it's a court decision" - they just turned around the mightiest nation in the world about a War that was annointed by Congress, annointed by the Pentagon, anncinted by the Chief Executive, and they have the gall to say that no candidate can come in and talk about something as relatively trivial as busing. That's really what Mark is saying. Moreover, I would completely disagree with what he says -- that this helps Wallace -- because it doesn't help Wallace. It helps Jackson.

ENSOR: Political analyst and Jackson-supporter Ben Wattenberg. After Jackson's victory in Massachusetts, there was much discussion in the press about how much his anti-busing position might have helped him. A poll taken by CBS and The New York Times before the vote showed 71% of the nation now oppose busing and see it as an important voting issue. But only around 14% of Massachusetts' voters the pollsters talked to said their candidate's position on busing was of paramount importance. And most of those had said that they'd voted for Governor Wallace.

Wattenberg thinks the more liberal Democrats have taken an unfair and unrealistic stand about whether busing should be a voter issue -- and to their own peril, he says.

WATTENBERG: You know, the busing issue is a very fascinating one - in that liberals say two things. The first they says is -- "Busing really isn't an issue. It's not a real issue." As if they can sit back here in Washington and determine what is a real issue, and what is not a real issue. They say it's a phony issue - except that it's upset tens of millions of Americans, and, again, getting back to what we're talking about, it's not something that a great issue finding board makes a proclamation on. An issue is something that candidates or groups disagree about, and a cutting issue is something that people are prepared to vote about.

The candidates in the Democratic primaries do fall into two groups -- generally divided into pro-busing and anti-busing, although neither of those groups are quite that simple. And both of them in some instances attempt to fuzz it up. And the other thing that liberals say is -- "Not only is it not a real issue, but it's only an issue in a few selected communities, just here and there." I would say that neither of those judgments is correct. A - it is a real issue because the people have said it's a real issue. And, B - while it's more potent surely in McCumb County north of Detroit or in Boston or in Louisville, it does give the voter a sense of where the candidate's head is at. Does he see the world as I see it?

ENSOR: The views of Jackson-supporter Ben Wattenberg. Yet, on the other side of the coin, a Lou Harris poll taken in January found three-quarters of respondents agreed with the proposition that the candidate that tries to get the votes of white people by opposing forced busing will end up enforcing busing because that is the law of the land, which led pollster Harris to say, "The politics of appeal to easy fear is finished."

So, where are we on busing as a voter issue? Are its many opponents planning to vote as Wattenberg says for a man who sees the world as they do? Or are they as the wisened up respondents Lou Harris found going to only consider stands on issues where they think a President really can make a difference? No one can be sure, but a couple of things seem clear. For one, since both Republican hopefuls oppose busing, it will only be an issue in the general election if the Democrats support it. And if the economy isn't in pretty good shape in November, a pro-busing Democrat will probably be able to focus on jobs and inflation, bread and butter issues, leaving the Republicans little time to bring up busing between debates on economics.

Busing will only be crucial this year if in the multiple-candidate Democratic primaries, voters see it as a choice between a field of candidates who basically take what Wattenberg calls a "New Deal" position on economics, but who clearly disagree on whether the courts should have busing as a final option, when all other school desegregation techniques have failed. And, in the final run-off, most observers agree that it will be Democrat vs. Republican on economics and little else. For OPTIONS IN EDUCATION, this is David Ensor.

BLAIR: David Ensor's report is adapted from a special series on election issues. You can hear the series on "All Things Considered", NPR's week-night news magazine.

In this next report, John Merrow takes a look at the controversy over the use of research findings to influence public opinion.

MERROW: In this election year, it's a common observation that busing leads to heightened racial tension and to increased racial fears. Those who favor integration might respond, "Yes - but, the fears are temporary. People can and do learn to get along together." And integrationists cite the example of Pontiac, Michigan and Charlotte, Mecklenberg, North Carolina.

The opponents of court-ordered desegregation and the opponents of integration - they're not the same thing - believe that the increased fears and heightened tension lead, in turn, to resegregation because whites simply leave the area. That's the phenomenon known as "White Flight". It's reasonable to look at the research that's been done on these issues, but then we must be careful to ask just how much the opinions and values of the scientists affect the research itself.

Right now, the social science research community is as badly split as the country at large on the issue of school desegregation. The point men for the two factions are Dr. James M. Coleman and Dr. Kenneth B. Clark, both widely respected social scientists, but not by each other.

CLARK: Professor Coleman clearly asserted initially that his conclusions concerning the detrimental consequences of busing emerged directly out of his empirical research. This, without question, is misleading to the general public, and to his professional colleagues, and I believe deliberately so.

My criticism of Professor Coleman may seem to some reasonable observers as unnecessarily harsh. I, nonetheless, contend without apology that Professor James Coleman, in his recent public utterances, has deliberately misled the American public and has used his status and his prestige as a publicized social scientist of the forum from which he now projects his personal biases.

MERROW: I spoke with Professor Coleman by phone and asked him if his views do exceed the data.

COLEMAN: I'm not sure what one means by "views exceeding the data". My views are really based on two things: One, what I see as the long run liability of various kinds of policies, and another is what is an appropriate division between the rights of the states and individuals. The first of these two components is very much consequences of the data itself. That is, if there were no white flight, I would say that these policies are in the long run viable. To say that there is white flight and has been white flight is certainly true, but it misses the point. The point is: If we're trying to have cities with some degree of racial mixture, and some degree of integration in the large central cities of our country, then it seems absolutely ludicrous to attempt to carry out actions that have the end result of making those cities predominately Black cities which is going to make any kind of integration in large metropolitan areas very diffcult to achieve.

MERROW: In actual fact, Coleman's study had very little to do with court-ordered desegregation. The study concerned white flight from the cities, and most of the cities he studied were not under a court

order to desegregate. In response to Clark's attack, Coleman simply says that Clark is his own worst enemy. But Coleman does object to the accusation that he is using his position to attract national attention.

COLEMAN: Well, the "splash" that was created was a consequence of other things - not by something that was engineered on my part in any kind of way. I've attempted to maintain my isolation from news reporters as much as possible. In fact, you're the first one I've talked to in some period of time.

MERROW: Clark is not only upset with Coleman. He feels that the largely white social science community has not reacted properly, even ethically, to Coleman's pronouncements. On the other hand, Coleman feels that he is being harassed by some of his fellow social scientists. First, Clark:

CLARK: Such unquestioned immunity is more likely to be granted to those social scientist celebrities who expound a point of view which is supportive of the status quo. And who are certainly not firmly aligned with those citizens and government officials who are seeking racial justice and social equity.

On the other hand, those social scientists whose values require them to be openly aligned with those who are a part of the ongoing struggle for racial and social justice are more likely - even by their professional colleagues and associations - to be required to meet very severe tasks of scientific integrity and personal probity. This is a double standard within the associations of social science itself.

MERROW: Clark was speaking at a recent Symposium on Social Science, Education and the Courts held in Washington in February. That Symposium was convened by the National Institute of Education, which in August of 1975 sponsored an extensive re-examination of Coleman's data. At that gathering, several social scientists strongly attacked Coleman's conclusions. Coleman sees a pattern in all of this.

COLEMAN: That dogma is dogma to have compulsory racial balance in the large central cities. Damaging, though that may be to the ultimate cause of school desegregation and to the ultimate goals of an integrated society, those actions, as I said, are no longer productive.

MERROW: You seem to be saying that those proponents are so wedded to their beliefs that rather than re-analyze their own views, they're dedicated to driving out the heresy you propound. Is that it?

COLEMAN: Exactly.

MERROW: And that you're being pursued by some kind of "Truth Squad."

COLEMAN: That's exactly right.

MERROW: He also accused the social science community of tolerating what you've been saying. Your view, however, is that the social science community has been scrutinizing you with far more care than they ought to.

COLEMAN: Not the social science community - just the "Truth Squad" that decided to organize itself to do it.

MERROW: At least in part, Coleman bases his judgment about the wisdom of busing and court-ordered desegregation on public reaction. How do most people react to busing, Coleman asks, and his answer is: They don't like busing and they flee to the suburbs if they can. Busing is, therefore, self-defeating because it resegregates, Coleman concludes.

On the other hand, minorities in America mistrust the idea that their rights should be left to the will of the majority, which is how Clark perceives the present situation.

CLARK: The majority of American whites, and particularly Northerners, now oppose all attempts to comply with the letter and the spirit of the Brown Decision. I repeat - an objective, scientific finding of mine is that the majority of American whites - particularly Northerners - now oppose all attempts to comply with the letter and spirit of the Brown Decision. If the issue of the desegregation of the public schools were to be put to referendum now, 20 years after the historic Brown Decision, there is no question that it would be defeated. It is difficult to believe that the present group of social scientists, the neo-liberal revisionists, are not aware of the fact that in counseling that the Constitutional rights of Negro children be determined by the attitudes of the white majority rather than by the courts, that they are, in fact, arguing that these Constitutional rights be denied.

MERROW: Clark called his own finding that the majority of American whites opposes the implementation of the Brown Decision "objective and scientific". But he cited no data.

There is data from the National Opinion Research Survey that the majority opposes busing to desegregate schools, but that is not necessarily opposition to integration. But if Clark overstates his case, so does Coleman.

COLEMAN: I think the American public would vote for integrated schools. I don't think that the American public would make the confusion that Dr. Clark apparently makes between the Brown Decision on the one hand, and compulsory racial balance in the schools on the other - because the Brown Decision never even envisioned the kind of things, for example, which have been ordered in the Court in Boston. That's what the American public would vote against even though they would vote in favor - very strongly in favor - of the Brown Decision.

MERROW: Yes, but you seem to be saying that if a whole lot of parents are, in fact, afraid for their kids - legitimately or not - then that alone is enough reason to re-think what we're doing.

COLEMAN: I think that is enough reason to re-think what we're doing. If it's a legitimate fear, then I think it's sufficient reason not to carry out that specific action.

MERROW: The polls say a majority opposes busing to desegregate. Clark interprets that to mean opposition to Brown and to integration. Coleman says that Clark and the courts favor compulsory racial balance. It's Coleman's strongly held opinion that the Federal courts have exceeded their authority in desegregation cases, and are trying to bring about racially balanced schools. Some school segregation is caused by employment and housing patterns - that is, it is de facto school segregation, and Coleman says it's not the courts' job to get rid of that.

On the other hand, Clark believes that the Federal courts are the last, best hope of protecting the rights of minorities. Closer to the heart of the matter are values: Should policy decisions and court decisions rely on social science research if that research is value-laden? Is it possible to do value-free research? And, if not, should research be an adversary process in which you pick your researchers and I'll pick mine?

Clark has accused Coleman of delivering opinions in the guise of research findings, and of doing so deliberately. I asked Clark, a dedicated integrationist, whether he could keep his values and opinions out of his own research.

CLARK: There is no question that every social scientist, like every human being, brings his values, his perspective of life and justice and peace and decency to what he does. He brings it to his interpretations, and there is no such thing as a computerized form of objectivity when a human being is involved. This, however, I don't think should be confused with what I believe to be the serious problem presented by Professor Coleman, where he did give the impression - it was misleading advertising in a way - that his personal bias is about, you know, the lack of wisdom of busing was supported by his data. I think that you do not accept that kind of thing from your graduate students. You certainly should not accept it from a distinguished professor.

MERROW: Perhaps the fabric of life would be better if we expanded Mark Twain's quote about untruths. He said there were three. I take it that you would make it four. There are "lies, damned lies, statistics and social science research."

CLARK: Well . . . I just don't want to engage in a categorical repudiation of social science research because social science research like anything else can either be perverted or one can assume the arduous and difficult struggle of trying to make it an instrument of truth and justice, which to me, by the way, are one and the same. I make no distinctions between truth and justice. On these - or other matters.

MERROW: Several years ago, James Coleman developed a set of principles for social scientists studying current issues. "One's values should play a role in the choice of issues to study," Coleman said, "and advocacy is appropriate, but," Coleman added, "advocacy is appropriate only after the information is presented objectively." He wrote, "It may be difficult to separate the advocate and the scientist, but it is necessary to do so - for if it is not done, then the policy research loses its value for all interested parties." Coleman did go beyond his data, and he failed to separate Coleman the Scientist from Coleman the Advocate, but - and this is the continuing problem - his policy research has not lost its value for all interested parties, as he said would happen. His opinions and conclusions have been amplified by the media, and are cited in courts of law and on the political trail.

Kenneth Clark talked about the arduous and difficult struggle to make social science research an instrument of truth and justice, but perhaps courts should base decisions on other evidence - that is, segregation is wrong, and was wrong in 1954, not because it has bad effects on some children, but because it is morally, ethically, and constitutionally wrong.

The Washington Post observed recently that "in most cases, science cannot be substituted for the questions of morality, justice, or politics that are at the bottom of our national dilemma."

There are plenty of scientists, politicians and reporters looking for headlines who deliberately or not distort research findings. It behooves all of us to regard the latest scientific studies on controversial issues with some skepticism and much caution. This is John Merrow.

(Music)

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